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METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR EDITING IMAGE DATA,
AND COMPUTER PROGRAM PRODUCT OF EDITING IMAGE DATA

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

The present application relates to subject matters described in co-pending application Serial No. 09/337,331 filed on July 21, 1999 and assigned to the
5 assignee of the present application.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to the production and editing of image data, or in particular to an image data editing method, an editing apparatus and a
10 computer program product for carrying out the method used to produce a television broadcast program or a video program.

In recent years, an image data editing system has been developed for producing image data using the
15 computer from GG animation, moving image data, still image data, text data, audio data, sound synthesis data by combining the techniques of animation, sound synthesis and moving image reproduction.

Further, an image data editing method has
20 been conceived in which a TV program is described as a script in time series in the same way as writing a scenario, and the script is interpreted by the computer to create a TV program. According to this method,

image data can be interactively edited easily even by a person who has thus far been engaged in the preparation of a program schedule table. In this image data editing method, the editing state is displayed on the display screen and the GUI (graphical user interface) operation can be performed for automatically producing the script.

Examples of the image data editing system for creating a TV program interactively between the user and the computer are disclosed in "Desk-top TV Program Creation -TVML (TV Program Making Language) Editor-", Ueda et al., Association for Computing Machinery, September 1998; "Program Creation/Interactive Editing System Based on TV Program Making Language TVML", by Toshiaki Yokoyama, et al., 3rd Intelligence Information Media Symposium, December 1997; "Development of Man-Machine Interface of TV Program Making Language TVML", by Toshiaki Yokoyama, et al., September 1997 Society Convention of The Institute of Electronics, Information and Communication Engineers; and "Program Making Language TVML Making Possible Desk Top Creation of Personal TV Program", by Masaki Hayashi, Broadcast Technologies, January 1999, pp. 139-144.

In the TVML editor disclosed in these references, a program for a virtual studio, i.e. a CG (computer graphics) studio can be created with a computer and a screen connected thereto using the animation characters (CG characters) stored in a large-

capacity random access memory such as a hard disk drive, a CG studio set image data library, a voice synthesis tool and an animation production tool without using a real studio or actors/actresses.

5 An image of a program being edited or created can be displayed on the editing screen of the TVML editor. The image displayed is the one viewed from a preset direction of projection, i.e. the eye of the camera in a virtual studio. During the creation or
10 editing of a program image, the processing is required for moving CG characters and other CG objects on stage and setting the speech and the motion of each CG character accurately in conformance with each other. For changing the set data of the CG characters in the
15 virtual studio, it is necessary to open the setting input screen and input data from the keyboard or the like. This work for changing the setting, which requires the operations of opening different windows and inputting data of information from the keyboard a
20 number of times, is complicated and low in efficiency.

 The editing screen used in the conventional image data editing method will be explained with reference to Fig. 6. Fig. 6 shows an example of the screen of the conventional TV program editing device
25 displayed on the monitor. Numeral 201 designates an editing window, numerals 202, 202' studio blocks for setting the speech and motion of CG characters and the camera to image the interior of the CG studio, numeral

203 a movie block, numeral 204 a title block, numeral
205 a superimposition block, numeral 206 a sound block,
numeral 207 a narration block, numeral 208 a block for
miscellaneous setting, numeral 209 event marks, numeral
5 210 a monitor window, numerals 211, 212 representative
screens, numerals 213, 214 slider sections, numeral 215
a start block and numeral 220 a menu bar.

On the left side of the editing window 201
shown in Fig. 6, the image output on the display screen
10 is indicated by a vertical column having the studio
block 202, the movie block 203, the title block 204,
the studio block 202', etc. In the editing window 201,
the ordinate represents the time and the work of TV
program creation is conducted downward on the display
15 screen.

Fig. 7 is an enlarged view of the studio
block 202 shown in Fig. 6. Numeral 202 designates the
studio block, numeral 301 a speech setting section for
setting the speech, voice type, etc. of the CG
20 characters speaking in the CG studio, numeral 302 a
motion setting section for arranging and setting the
motion of the CG characters walking or otherwise
behaving, numeral 303 a camera work setting section for
designating the camera work, and numeral 304 a studio
25 set-up button for setting the initial values of the
positions of the CG characters and the camera in the
studio, the background of the CG studio, properties and
scenery and the combination thereof. The set informa-

tion of the CG studio, the speech and motion of the CG characters and the camera work information are displayed in the studio block 202.

Returning to Fig. 6, the movie block 203 is a section to set the operation for controlling the reproduction of the moving image already edited and prepared in advance, and displays the file name of the moving image and other information. By clicking the representative screen 211 on the left side of the movie block 203 by mouse, for example, a movie setting window (not shown) pops up on the display screen. At the same time as the reproduction, rapid feed and rewinding of the moving image by the operation of editing and setting the movie setting window, in-points and out-points, and timing of superimposition, narration and speech, etc. are designated. The title block 204 is a section in which the display of the text information and a still image on the TV receiver screen or the movie screen, for example, is controlled. When the representative screen 212 on the left side of the title block 204 is clicked, for example, a title window (not shown) pops up on the display screen and the editing of the title screen is made possible.

A superimposition block 205 is a section
25 where the superimposition of text combined with the
image output on the TV receiver or the movie screen is
controlled, and a sound block 206 is a section in which
the background music (BGM) or the like music combined

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operator, an event is newly added to the studio block
202, which extends vertically, so that the blocks lower
than the studio block 202 in the screen (the movie
blocks 203 and subsequent blocks, for example) are
5 displaced by one line downward. In this way, after
adding an event to each block, the miscellaneous
setting of the particular event is carried out. For
example, the speech of characters is input to the
speech column (cell) in the studio block 202. A TV
10 program is created by this operation.

Fig. 8 is a diagram in which a speech window
is displayed above the edit window displayed on the
display screen. The same component element as those
described above are designated by the same reference
15 numerals, respectively. Numeral 201-1 designates an
edit window, numeral 210-1 a monitor window, numeral
401 a speech window, numeral 402 a character setting
menu for designating a CG character who speaks in the
speech window 401, numeral 403 a speech type setting
20 menu for selecting the use of a text or an audio file,
numeral 404 a text box for inputting the words in the
case where the text is selected in the speech type
setting menu 403, numeral 405 a wait check button for
awaiting a start of execution of the next command until
25 the end of the ongoing speech by a CG character,
numeral 406 a rate scale for regulating the speed of
the speech, numeral 407 a volume scale for regulating
the sound volume of the speech, numeral 408 an intona-

tion scale for regulating the intonation of the speech, numeral 409 a pitch scale for regulating the pitch of the speech, numeral 410 a closed caption setting menu for changing the caption, numeral 411 a motion change menu for changing the motion of a CG character, numeral 412 a lip sensitivity scale for regulating the lip sensitivity of a CG character, numeral 413 a pause text box for inputting the number of seconds for which the preceding pause (the period from the start of an event to the time when the character begins to speak) and the tail pause (the period from the time when the character stops speaking to the end of the event), numeral 414 a wait menu for selecting the waiting or not waiting for a speech command, numeral 415 a preview button for previewing the speech of the CG character, numeral 416 a default button for changing the value set in the window to a default value, numeral 417 a cancel button for restoring the window setting to the state prevailing when the window is opened, and numeral 418 a close button for closing the window by use of the setting in the window. The lip sensitivity is a command factor determined by the TVML language specification, which is a coefficient for determining the size of the mouth opening according to the sound level. In the case where it is desired to set the speech of a CG character in the CG studio, the mouse is double clicked at the cell of the speech setting section 301 in Fig. 7. The speech window 401 is displayed on the screen as shown

in Fig. 8. The creator desiring that the CG character B speaks a text, for example, first double clicks the mouse at the cell of the desired position in the self setting section 301 to open the speech window 401. The character setting menu 402 is set to the CG character B, and the character string which the producer desires the CG character B speaks is input in the text box 404. After setting the other parameters, the close button 418 is clicked. Thus the creator can cause the CG character to speak the words of the speech.

Not only to set the speech of the CG character, it is also possible to edit a desired event by double clicking the block of the event or the cell of the setting section and thus opening the related window.

The GUI used in this invention will be explained with reference to Fig. 11. Fig. 11 is a pop-up menu of the OSF/Motif widget which is one of the GUI parts. Numeral 800 designates a menu window for displaying a pop-up menu, numeral 801 a parent widget such as "form", "row/column" or "bulletin board" for displaying the pop-up menu, numeral 802 pop-up menu frame, numeral 803 a label widget for menu title, numeral 804 a separator widget for defining menu items, and numeral 805 a push-button widget constituting a menu item. The pop-up menu is of such a type that the menu is displayed when the mouse is clicked. The OSF/Motif (open software foundation) is an organization

engaged in standardization of the operating system and
is composed of DEC (Digital Equipment Corporation), HP
(Hewlett Packard) and IBM (International Business
Machine Corporation). The widget is defined as a high-
5 level GUI in the X window proposed by OSF/Motif and
includes a library call for supplying various "parts"
considered necessary for the user interface. Among
these parts, the availability and quantity of the
labels, separators and buttons of the menu can be
10 determined freely.

Generally, the pop-up menu is of such a type
that the menu is displayed in response to clicking of
the mouse. Normally, a pop-up menu appears on the
display screen when the right button of the mouse is
15 clicked within an area where the pop-up menu is
registered. The desired menu item is selected by
moving the mouse vertically on the pop-up menu display
screen while keeping the mouse depressed.

In the case where it is desired for a CG
20 character B to speak a speech in a program already
edited, for example, a line of an event is inserted
(added) at an event position where it is desired for
the CG character to speak the speech. The speech
window is opened by double clicking the cell of the
25 event speech setting section 301. It is also necessary
to set the character setting menu 402 and input the
desired character string to the text box. The setting
is impossible unless a plurality of operations similar

5 to be created is so long, the events are required to be checked by manipulating the scroll bar 213 of the edit window 201 by mouse and thus scrolling the contents of the display in the window. This makes it very difficult to grasp the contents.

10 Each event includes eight command types
including "speech", "motion", "camera", "superimposi-
tion", "sound", "mixer", "narration" and "miscellaneous
setting". One event can be edited or set for each
command type. If all the command types are set, there-
15 fore, a maximum of eight commands can be set for each
event. The commands including "speech", "motion",
"camera", "superimposition", "sound", "mixer",
"narration" and "miscellaneous setting" set in each
event are executed in that order.

20 In the conventional method of editing image
data, the text information of the script of the video
program displayed in the edit window is scrolled while
searching for a point of a command to be edited, and
the relation between the particular command and the
25 preceding and following commands is checked based on
the information on the screen. Then, the edit work
such as insertion, modification and deletion of a
command is carried out by inputting the text informa-

Especially in the case where the program created is so long, the program contents are very difficult to grasp when scrolling the contents of display in the edit window and thus checking the commands executed.

This repetitive operation is so complicated as to increase the inclination to be more dependent on the memory and skill of the user, and forms one of the causes of a suppressed production efficiency.

Further, the cooperation between the work of checking the monitor window after the edit operation and an additional edit work is not sufficient, and
20 requires a similar complicated operation.

Also in the conventional edit screen described in the references cited above, a each change in the set data of a CG object in the virtual studio requires that the set input screen is opened and the data is input from the keyboard or the like. In this work of changing the setting, the repetitive sessions of operation of opening different windows and inputting data through the keyboard are necessary, thus compli-



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CG studio displayed on the display unit and the information on the position and orientation of the camera for imaging the CG studio are read from a memory; it is determined whether the CG object selected by a pointing device is a CG character or a property; the information on the position to which the pointing icon on the display unit has been moved by operating the pointing device is obtained thereby to move the selected CG object to the position to which the CG object is moved; and based on the information on the position to which the CG object has moved, the data in the character set-up window are updated in the case where the CG object is a CG character, and the data in the studio set-up window are updated in the case where the CG object is a property. The selected CG object can be dragged to and arranged at the desired position with the pointing device.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 shows an example of a command select menu displayed in an image data editing method according to an embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 2 shows another example of a command select menu displayed in an image data editing method according to an embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 3 shows still another example of a command select menu displayed in an image data editing method according to an embodiment of the present

Fig. 4 shows yet another example of a command select menu displayed in an image data editing method according to an embodiment of the present

Fig. 5 is a block diagram showing a configuration of an image data editing system according to an embodiment of the invention.

Fig. 7 shows a detailed a studio block in the edit window of a TV program editing apparatus.

Fig. 8 shows a speech window and a monitor window in the edit screen of a TV program editing

Fig. 9 is a flowchart for explaining the process of operation in an image data editing method

Fig. 10 is a flowchart for explaining the process of operation in an image data editing method

Fig. 11 is a diagram for explaining a pop-up menu on the edit screen.

Fig. 12 shows an edit window in the image data editing method according to an embodiment.

Fig. 13 shows a dialog for deleting a command in the edit window of the image data editing apparatus

Fig. 23 is a diagram for explaining a CG character moved in accordance with the dragging of the

Fig. 24 shows an example of relative positions of the coordinates of the camera, the CG object and the mouse pointer in an editing method according to the invention.

10 Fig. 26 is a diagram for explaining a method
for determining the area of a CG object.

Fig. 28 is a diagram for explaining a method
15 of transforming the coordinate of the area of a CG
object in the CG studio into a two-dimensional
coordinate on the projection surface.

Fig. 30 is a diagram for explaining the coordinate systems of an editing method according to an embodiment of the invention.

Fig. 31 is a diagram showing the relation between the view point and the projection surface in the zx plane to transform to the projection coordinate.

Fig. 33 is a flowchart showing an example of the process for determining the 3D coordinate of a CG object in an editing method according to the invention.

Fig. 35 shows a method of calculating the deviation angle of the mouse pointer from the direction of the line of sight in the zx plane.

Fig. 37 is a diagram showing the direction in which the CG object moves as viewed by the user from the front side thereof.

Fig. 39 is a diagram showing the direction in which the CG object moves as viewed by the user from the top thereof.

Fig. 40 is a flowchart showing the process of operation from the selection to the end of movement of a CG object.

Fig. 41 is a flowchart showing the process of moving a CG object in an editing method according to an embodiment of the invention.

Fig. 42 is a flowchart showing the process of
5 determining the projection coordinate of a CG object
and highlighting the coordinate setting section in an
editing method according to the invention.

Fig. 43 is a diagram showing an example of highlighted display of the direction in which a CG object moves as viewed by the user from the front side thereof.

Fig. 44 is a diagram showing an example of highlighted display of the direction in which a CG object moves as viewed by the user from the right side thereof.

Fig. 45 is a diagram showing an example of highlighted display of the direction in which a CG object moves as viewed by the user from the top thereof.

20 Fig. 46 is a flowchart of the process for
switching the display in the set-up window automati-
cally in an editing method according to the invention.

Fig. 47 shows a basic edit screen of a TV program creation device for setting properties in an editing method according to the invention.

Fig. 48 shows a basic edit screen of a TV program creation device for setting a character in an editing method according to the invention.

Fig. 49 is a diagram showing the relation between the azimuth of the camera and the plane in which a CG object moves.

Fig. 50 is a diagram showing the relation
5 between the elevation of the camera and the plane in which a CG object moves.

Fig. 51 is a flowchart of the process from the clicking of a CG object to the determination of the plane in which the CG object moves.

10 Fig. 52 is a diagram showing an example of a monitor window displayed with the camera azimuth of 0° and the camera elevation of 70° .

Fig. 53 is a diagram showing an example of a monitor window displayed with the camera azimuth of 30°
15 and the camera elevation of 0° .

Fig. 54 is a diagram showing an example of a monitor window displayed with the camera azimuth of 60° and the camera elevation of 0° .

DESCRIPTION OF THE EMBODIMENTS

20 An interactive image data editing system embodying the invention will be explained with reference to Fig. 5. Fig. 5 is a block diagram showing an example of a configuration of a TV program editing apparatus. Reference numeral 101 designates a CPU
25 (central processing unit), numeral 102 a memory, numeral 103 a CG animation generating unit, numeral 104 a sound synthesizer, numeral 105 a sequencer, numeral

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106 an event storage unit, numeral 107 a current event pointer storage unit, numeral 108 an edit screen generating unit, numeral 109 a magnetic recording unit, numeral 110 a moving image generating unit, numeral 111 a display unit, numeral 112 an input device including a pointing device such as a mouse and a keyboard, and numeral 113 a bus. The CPU 1 is connected through the bus 113 to the memory 102, the CG animation generating unit 103, the sound synthesizer 104, the sequencer 105, the event storage unit 106, the current event pointer storage unit 107, the edit screen generating unit 108, the magnetic recording unit 109, the moving image generating unit 110, the display unit 111 and the input device 112.

15 In Fig. 5, the CG animation generating unit
103 generates a CG animation of a CG character that
appears (hereinafter referred to as the appearing
character) and a CG studio set, and the sound
synthesizer 104 generates the speaking voice (including
20 a speech, a cry, the imitation sound, the effect sound
of the studio, etc.) of the appearing character. A
plurality of the sound synthesizers 104 may be used in
the case where a nation or a tribe uses a plurality of
languages. The moving image generating unit 110
25 displays a moving image already edited, and the memory
102 stores the commands for reproducing the speech and
the motion of the appearing character, the moving image
and the sound corresponding to the scenario of a TV

program. The sequencer 105 generates a TV program sequentially by controlling the CG animation generating unit 103, the sound synthesizer 104 and the moving image generating unit 110 based on the command information of a TV program stored in the memory 102. The display unit 111 displays the TV program and the edit information of the TV program created. The edit screen generating unit 108 displays an event edit screen for creating a TV program and manipulates the edit information of the program stored in the memory 102. The event storage unit 106 records in chronological order the commands for the TV program created on the event edit screen by the edit screen generating unit 108 and the commands for the TV program stored in the memory 102 and displayed on the event edit screen generated by the edit screen generating unit 108. The current event pointer storage unit 107 stores by acquiring from the event storage unit 106 the pointer of an event to be edited on the event edit screen generated by the edit screen generating unit 108. The input device 112 is for giving an instruction for display to the display unit 111, an instruction for reproduction to the sequencer 105 and an instruction for editing the TV program command information stored in the memory 102. The input device 112 is mainly made up of a pointing device such as a mouse for GUI operation and a keyboard for GUI operation. The magnetic storage unit 109 stores the modeling data of the appearing character,

the data on the CG studio, the image information of the moving image and the audio data (such as music, background sound, etc.) as well as the edit data. The magnetic storage unit 109 may be a remote file

20 The use of the editing system described above
makes it possible to arrange the scenario of the TV
program in chronological order and efficiently edit it,
and also to produce and output the TV program thus
created. The image data editing method according to an
25 embodiment of the invention described below is imple-
mented by the system shown in Fig. 5.

9, 10 and 12. Figs. 1 to 4 are diagrams for explaining a pop-up menu of a command list displayed by being popped up on the monitor window according to an embodiment of the invention. Fig. 9 is a flowchart for explaining the process of operation for displaying a command select menu (command list) according to an embodiment of the invention. Fig. 10 is a flowchart for explaining the process of operation for selecting a command from the command select menu according to the invention. Fig. 12 is a diagram showing an edit window according to an embodiment of the invention. The component elements having the function coincident with those explained with reference to the prior art are designated by the same reference numerals, respectively. As to other component elements, reference numerals 210-1', 501, 501-1, 501-2, 501-3 designate a monitor window, numeral 230 a character B, numeral 231 a pointer, numerals 500, 502 a command select menu, numerals 502a, 502b a scroll button, numeral 503 an editing method select button, numeral 504 a command modification button, numeral 505 a command change button, numeral 506 a command add button, numerals 507, 507', 507" a change command type menu, numeral 508 an add command type menu, numeral 509 a speech change button, numeral 510 a motion change button, numeral 511 a camera change button, numeral 512 a superimposition change button, numeral 513 a sound change button, numeral 514 a mixer change button, numeral 515 a

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The initial screen on the monitor window 501

shown in Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 13 is basically identical to the initial screen on the monitor window 210 shown in Fig. 6. Fig. 16 shows a window for reproducing, upon completion of the edit work or during the edit work, the image of a video program that has already been edited by that time. In the case where the user checks an image that has already been edited, the screen of the monitor window 210 is opened as shown in Fig. 16. Numeral 201 designates an edit window, numeral 210 a monitor window, numeral 1001 a preview controller, numeral 1002 a play button, and numeral 1003 a pause button. By clicking the play button 1002 of the preview controller 1001 displayed with the monitor window 210, the video programs that have already been edited are reproduced on the screen of the monitor window 210 in the order of progress of the scenario thereof. As the user watches a reproduced image, the user can edit an event such as modifying, changing, adding or deleting the setting of a command of the video program.

In the image data editing method according to this invention, the additional edit work such as the modification, change, addition or deletion of the setting of an event of a video program can be easily accomplished by directly designating a CG object in the image on the monitor window. Specifically, when the user selects one of the CG objects in the image on the monitor window by the pointing device, a list showing

the names of commands that can be edited for the selected CG object is opened as a select menu on the display screen. The user selects the name of the desired command to be edited from the command select
5 menu and thus makes the particular command ready for editing.

Fig. 9 is a flowchart for explaining the process of operation for displaying the command select menu. Fig. 10 is a flowchart for explaining the
10 process of operation performed in the case where the desired command has been selected from the command select menu in the process shown in Fig. 9.

First, the user clicks the play button 1002 of the preview controller 1001 (Fig. 16) by use of the
15 pointing device to reproduce the edited video program and checks the image reproduced on the monitor window 210. In step 601, it is determined whether the play button 1002 has been clicked or not. When a point (event) requiring the reedit work is found in the
20 reproduced image, the user clicks the pause button 1003 (Fig. 16). In the case where the answer in step 601 is YES, it is determined in step 602 whether the pause button 1003 has been clicked or not. In the case where the answer in step 602 is YES, the command including
25 the image reproduced when the pause button 1003 is clicked is acquired as the current command in step 603.

Then, the user designates a CG object to be reedited on the monitor window 210. In step 604, it is

5 position on the monitor window 210 is acquired from the
CG animation generating unit 103 in step 605. Further,
in step 606, all the commands stored in the event
storage unit 106 are acquired. In step 607, a command
select menu (command list) 502 containing the names of
10 all the acquired commands arranged in chronological
order is produced and displayed in superimposition on
the monitor window 210. In the command select menu
502, the names of the commands of the video programs
thus far edited by the user and stored in the event
15 storage unit 106 are displayed in one vertical column.
The current command acquired in step 603 is displayed
in the central column of the command select menu 502,
while the commands before and after the current command
are displayed in the range adapted for display above
20 and below the column of the current command name. The
commands that cannot be displayed within the frame of
the command select menu 502 can be displayed by operat-
ing the scroll buttons 502a, 502b. By displaying the
command select menu 502, the user can easily grasp the
25 order in which a plurality of commands, if any, are
executed, thereby shortening the time for the reedit
work.

In step 608, the first image of the current

command is displayed on the monitor window 210. Then,
the user selects by clicking one command in the command
select menu 502 by use of the pointing device. In step
608, it is determined whether any one of the commands
5 in the command select menu 502 has been selected or
not. In the case where the answer in step 608 is YES,
the process proceeds to step 701 in Fig. 10. In the
case where the answer in step 608 is NO, on the other
hand, it is determined in step 610 whether the scroll
10 button 502a has been clicked or not or in step 610 or
it is determined in step 611 whether the scroll button
502b has been clicked or not. In the case where any
one of the scroll buttons 502a, 502b has been clicked,
the process for changing the display range of the
15 command select menu 502 is executed in step 612. In
step 613, the name of the current command is updated by
shifting the display upward or downward in response to
the operation of the scroll button 502a in step 610 or
the operation of the scroll button 502b in step 611.
20 Thus, the menu updated in step 607 is displayed again.
In this way, all the commands from the start to the end
of the video program can be checked on the command
select menu 502 and the monitor window 501.

All the icons of the command name column
25 displayed in the command select menu 502 are cascade
buttons, as shown in Fig. 1. When a command is
selected from the command select menu 502 in step 609,
the process proceeds to step 701 in Fig. 10.

Figs. 14 and 15 show the difference of the image displayed on the monitor window 210 in the case where different commands are selected from the command select menu 502. Fig. 14 is an example of the monitor window 210 displayed when the command 502-1 is selected from the command select menu 502. Fig. 15 is an image of the monitor window 210 displayed when the command 502-2 is selected from the command select menu 502. By switching the commands, the state of the CG object appearing on the screen can be checked.

In step 701, a menu (command list) 503 for selecting the editing method (command type) is displayed. The editing method select menu 503 has four buttons including a command modify button 504, a command change button 505, a command add button 506 and a command delete button 531 according to the type of the command.

When the command modify button 504 is clicked, the command selected from the command select menu 502 can be modified. This command modify button 504 can be used, for example, in the case where it is desired to change the speech of the CG character or to finely adjust the camera position or the imaging range for the command selected from the command select menu 502.

In step 702, it is determined whether the command modify button 504 has been clicked or not. In the case where the answer is YES, the process proceeds

to step 712 in which the selected command is stored in the current command pointer storage unit 107 (Fig. 5). In step 713, the type of the selected command is determined. In step 714, an operation window corresponding to the command type is displayed. The process then proceeds to step 717 for modifying the selected command. When the command modification is completed by closing the operation window, the editing process is carried out according to the contents set by the modified command. The image edited in response to the modified command is stored in the command storage unit 106.

By operating the command change button 505 (Fig. 1), the command selected from the command select menu 502 can be exchanged with other command. In the case where the current command selected from the command select menu 502 is the speech and the CG character is caused to speak the speech, the narrator can be newly caused to do so by changing the current command to the narration. The command change (exchange) button 505 makes up a cascade button. When the command change button 505 is clicked in step 703, the CG object selected in step 605 is determined in step 708. In step 710, a change command type menu (change command list) 507 is displayed based on the result of determination in step 708. The change command menu 507 is configured with 11 buttons for setting a change command, including a speech change

button 509, a motion change button 510, a camera change
button 511, a superimposition change button 512, a
sound change button 513, a mixer change button 514, a
narration change button 515, a miscellaneous setting
5 change button 516, a studio set-up change button 517, a
movie change button 518 and a title change button 519.

When it is determined in step 711 that any
one of the above-mentioned buttons has been clicked,
the selected command is stored in the current command
10 pointer storage unit 107 in step 715, and further the
operation window of the selected command type is
displayed in step 716. In step 717, the selected
command can be changed. When the command change is
completed by closing the operation window, the editing
15 process is carried out with the contents of setting of
the change command in step 718. The edited image of
the changed command is stored in the command storage
unit 106. At the same time, the command and the
command block or the setting section displayed in the
20 command select menu 502 are also changed. The command
block or the setting section is changed by checking
whether a plurality of commands are included in the
command column associated with the command to be
changed and the process for change and the screen
25 display are carried out in a manner not to change the
order of commands.

The command add button 506 can be used to add
a command after the command selected from the command

select menu 502. Assuming, for example, that the current command selected from the command select menu 502 is the speech which a CG character is caused to speak, after the end of the speech, a command for
5 another motion such as a bow is set so that the image of the CG character bowing can be added. The command add button 506 is a cascade button. Upon determination in step 704 that the command add button 506 has been clicked, the selected CG object is determined in step
10 706. In step 707, the add command type menu 508 is displayed based on the result of determination in step 706. The add command type menu (add command list) 508 is configured with 11 buttons for adding a command, as shown in Fig. 2, including a speech add button 520, a
15 motion add button 521, a camera add button 522, a superimposition add button 523, a sound add button 524, a mixer add button 525, a narration add button 526, a miscellaneous setting add button 527, a studio add button 528, a movie add button 529 and a title add
20 button 530.

Upon detection in step 708 that one of these buttons has been clicked, the selected command is stored in the current command pointer storage unit 107 in step 715. Further, in step 716, the operation
25 window for the selected command type is displayed. The process proceeds to step 717 for adding the selected command. Upon complete command addition by closing the operation window, the editing process is carried out

After the command selected from the command select menu 502, the command edited by being selected from the add command type menu 508 is added, and the edited command

5 image thus produced is stored in the command storage unit 106. At the same time, the command is added to the commands displayed in the command select menu 502 and the event block or the setting section. In adding the command to the event block or the setting section, 10 the add process and the screen display process are carried out in a manner not to change the order of commands while making sure that the event for the added command has a plurality of commands.

The command delete button 531 is used for deleting the command selected from the command select menu 502. The command delete button 531 is a push-button type, and it is determined in step 705 whether the command delete button 531 has been clicked or not. In step 719, the command delete execution dialog 1004 of Fig. 13 is displayed. In the case where the command delete execution button (OK) 1005 is clicked in step 720, the selected command is stored in the current command pointer storage unit 107 in step 721. In step 718, the command selected from the command select menu 502 is deleted, and the command following the deleted command is stored in the command storage unit 106. At the same time, the block or the setting section of the command and the event displayed in the command select

menu 502 are also deleted. Also, when the click of the command delete execution cancel button 1006 is recognized in step 720, the command editing is terminated without carrying out the command delete process. By
5 displaying the dialog 1004 and selecting the execution or cancellation in this way, the operation of deleting a command erroneously can be avoided.

A more detailed explanation will be given of the CG object determination process and the display of
10 the add command type menu and the changed command type menu. In step 706 or 709, it is determined what is the CG object acquired from the CG animation generating unit 103 in step 605. In the CG object determination process, the CG object is classified into five objects
15 including "CG character", "properties", "studio", "movie" and "still image". In step 707 or 710, only the command type capable of implementing the CG object determined in the CG object determination process is displayed in the change command type menu 507 or the
20 add command type menu 508.

In the case where the CG object is a CG character, four buttons including a speech change button 509, a motion change button 510, a narration change button 515 and a studio set-up button 517 can be
25 selected from the change command type menu 507 (See Fig. 3.), while three buttons for setting an add command including a speech add button 520, a motion add button 521 and a narration add button 526 can be

selected from the add command type menu 508.

In the case where the CG object is a property, two buttons including the motion change button 510 and the studio set-up change button 517 can
5 be selected from the change command type menu 507, while only the motion add button 521 is selectable from the add command type menu 508.

In the case where the CG object is a CG studio, on the other hand, seven buttons including a
10 camera change button 511, a superimposition change button 512, a sound change button 513, a mixer change button 514, a narration change button 515, a miscellaneous setting change button 516 and a studio set-up change button 517 can be selected from the change
15 command type menu 507 (See Fig. 4.), while nine buttons for setting an add command, including a camera add button 522, a superimposition add button 523, a sound add button 524, a mixer add button 525, a narration add button 526, a miscellaneous setting add button 527, a
20 studio add button 528, a movie add button 529 and a title add button 530 can be selected from the add command type menu 508.

In the case where one frame of an image sequence or a still image is displayed in the monitor
25 window 210, the six buttons including the superimposition change button 512, the sound change button 513, the mixer change button 514, the narration change button 515, the miscellaneous setting change button

516, the movie change button 518 (for the moving image) and the title change button 519 (for the still image) can be selected from the change command type menu 507, while the nine buttons can be selected from the add
5 command type menu 508 like the add command type menu 508 corresponding to the case in which the CG object is the studio.

In the case where the selected CG object is a CG character or a property, the name and position of
10 the CG object are reflected on the display when the command type is selected from the change command type menu 507 or the add command type menu 508 and the operation window is displayed in step 716. Thus, when the command select menu window is opened for editing by
15 clicking the right button of the mouse for the CG character or the property, as the case may be, the name of the CG character name or the property for which the command is implemented has been updated to the name of the CG object clicked. In the case where the speech
20 window 401 is opened, for example, the name of the CG character selectively clicked is displayed (updated and set) in the character setting menu 402. In this way, the event editing of the selected CG character or the selected property can be easily designated on the
25 monitor window by the pointing device. Thus, the need is eliminated for the user to perform the complicated operation of inputting by character keys in a predetermined column of the CG character or the property to

designate the CG object for which an event is edited.

Fig. 17 shows an initial edit window displayed in the monitor for starting to create and edit a video program anew. When creating a program anew, the first step for the user to follow is to select "block (M)" of the menu bar 220 in the edit window 201 by mouse or the like, and further to select "new creation" from the menu on display. Then, three other menus including "studio", "movie" and "title" are displayed. From these three menus, a menu to be edited is selected. In this way, the selected one of the blocks including the studio block 202, the movie block 204 and the title block 211 is displayed between the start button 215 and the end button 216 (shown in Fig. 6).

Assuming that "studio" is selected out of the three menus, as shown in Fig. 18, the studio block 202, the superimposition block 205, the sound block 206, the narration block 207 and the miscellaneous setting block 208 appear on the screen. By this time point, the setting in each block is not yet complete, and therefore each event cell is displayed as a blank row.

An explanation will be given of a first method of displaying the monitor window 210 when starting the creation and editing of a video program anew.

In the case where the user double clicks the cell portion of the speech setting section 209 in the studio block 202 with mouse under the condition of Fig.

18, the monitor window 210 and the speech window 401 with the "default" studio set displayed are popped up and displayed as shown in Fig. 19. When the preview button 415 in the speech window 401 is depressed, the
5 reproduce operation is performed on the monitor window 201 in accordance with the command of the selected cell portion.

In the "default" studio set displayed on the monitor window 210, a background, scenery, properties
10 and a CG object predetermined come to appear at predetermined positions in the studio set with the camera sight set on the front, for example. This setting can be changed even during the editing process to a scene in which a desk constituting a scenery is
15 placed on the front and a CG character stands at the center of the studio in the CG studio, for example, by depressing the studio set-up button 304 or the default button 354 of the studio set-up window 351 in Fig. 21 described later.

20 As described above, assuming that the user initializes the desired speech or the desired motion of the CG character A 451, for example, by use of an input device on the speech window 401 or the studio set-up window 351 (Fig. 21) popped up for display. Then, the
25 contents (command) of the speech or motion, as the case may be, are written in the cell of either the speech setting section 301 or the motion setting section 302 in the studio block 202 which is double clicked by

mouse.

For reediting the first edited image with the speech and motion of the object initialized in this way, the method described with reference to the flow-
5 chart of Figs. 9 and 10 is carried out.

As described above, according to this invention, the contents of the event edited are easily grasped temporally and the event edit work is simplified and can be easily carried out. Thus, the efficiency of the creation of TV programs and moving image
10 can be improved.

Further, the CG object of the event to be edited can be designated by selecting the CG object such as the CG character or properties displayed on the
15 monitor window, and therefore, the operation is simplified. Not only that, since the editing result is displayed directly on the monitor window, an image data editing method can be realized in which the edit work can be very easily checked.

20 Now, the image editing method according to another embodiment of the invention will be explained. According to this embodiment, the editing process for modifying or changing the motion of a CG character, e.g. the movement and arrangement of the CG character
25 can be carried out by a simplified operation of designating a CG character directly on the monitor window and manipulating the mouse pointer on the monitor window.

The edit screen of the TV program editing device will be explained with reference to Fig. 20. Fig. 20 shows a basic edit screen displayed on the display unit 111. This edit screen is basically the same as the corresponding one shown in Fig. 6. The same reference numerals as those in Fig. 6 designate the same component parts, respectively.

In the system shown in Fig. 5, the TV program creator (hereinafter called the user) creates a TV program by the GUI operation on the edit screen shown in Fig. 20. First, the user generates a studio block 202, etc. and arranged them vertically on the edit window 201 in accordance with the desired scene of the program to be created. The program creation work is continued by detailed miscellaneous setting in the block. The following explanation is made taking the setting of the studio block 202 as an example.

In the case where a CG character and properties (hereinafter collectively called the CG object) are arranged in the studio, the studio set-up button 304 is clicked by mouse. As shown in Fig. 21, the studio set-up window 351 is displayed on the edit window 201. Fig. 21 is a diagram showing an example screen in which the studio set-up window is started. The same component elements having the same functions as those described above are designated by the same reference numerals as the corresponding component elements, respectively. Numeral 352 designates a

setting mode select menu for switching the setting mode between the CG character, the camera and the properties, numeral 353 an add button for adding a CG object or camera to the studio, numeral 354 a studio set
5 select menu for changing the CG studio set, numeral 355 a default button for initializing the values of arrangement of the CG object, etc., numeral 356 a cancel button for restoring the state before editing, numeral 357 a close button for ending the studio set-up
10 work, numeral 358 a character board, numeral 359 a name editing text field, numeral 360 a model select menu, numeral 361 a voice type menu, numeral 362 an arrangement x value text field, numeral 363 an arrangement z value text field, numeral 364 a direction d value text
15 field, and numeral 365 a state select menu. In the description that follows, the arrangement of a CG character will be taken up as an example. The character board 358 includes a name edit text field 359 for editing the name of the CG character, a model select
20 menu 360 for selecting the type of the character, the voice type menu 361 for selecting the type of the language spoken by the CG character, the arrangement x value text field 362 indicating the position of the x coordinate of the CG character, the arrangement z value
25 text field 363 indicating the z coordinate, the direction d text field 364 indicating the direction of the CG character, and the state select menu 365 for selecting the standing state or seated state. As many

character boards 368 as the CG characters are displayed. The coordinate of the CG studio is represented by, as viewed from the studio front, the horizontal direction as x axis (rightward direction indicated by +), the vertical direction as y axis (upward direction indicated by +), the direction along the depth as z axis (forward direction indicated by +), and the center of the floor surface (xz plane) of the CG studio as the origin. The CG studio front is defined as the direction of the view point displayed in the monitor window 210 in Figs. 20 and 21.

Fig. 22 is an enlarged view of the monitor window 210. The same component elements having the same functions as those described above are designated by the same reference numerals, respectively. In addition, numeral 451 designates a CG object, numeral 452 a view point option menu (hereinafter called the view point menu), numeral 453 an option menu for the position of the user view point (hereinafter called the position menu), and numeral 454 a user view point adjust button. Although Fig. 22 shows a case in which only one character is arranged, a plurality of characters may be involved, and the CG objects include, other than the character, such properties as a desk 455 and a sofa (not shown). The view point menu 452 is used for switching between the view point from the camera and the user view point set in advance by the creator. The user can switch five view points (for example, front,

just above, right, left, upper right) by the position menu 453. Also, by selecting the view point adjust button 454, the user can freely set the view point.

In the case where it is desired to move the
5 character 301 in the studio in x direction, the
arrangement x text field 362 (Fig. 21) is clicked by
mouse. The arrangement x value text field 362 is
defined by a red frame indicating that the x coordinate
value of the CG object can be changed. Under this
10 condition, a numerical value is input to the arrange-
ment x value text field 362 using the keyboard. The CG
character is moved to the designated position and
displayed on the monitor window 208.

When the arrangement x value text field 362
15 is defined by the red frame, the CG character can be
moved within the CG studio by dragging the mouse
pointer along x direction (horizontal direction in the
screen) on the monitor window 210. In similar fashion,
when the arrangement z value text field 364 is clicked
20 by mouse, the arrangement z value text field 364 is
defined by a red frame thereby making it possible to
change the z coordinate of the CG object. In that
state, the CG character can be moved within the CG
studio by dragging the mouse pointer along z direction
25 (vertical direction in the screen). The "drag" is
defined as the operation of moving the mouse pointer
while being depressed.

Fig. 23 is a diagram for explaining the

movement of the CG character with the dragging of the mouse pointer. In Fig. 23, the same component elements as those in Fig. 22 are designated by the same reference numerals, respectively, as in Fig. 22. In

5 addition, numeral 550 designates a mouse pointer, numeral 460 a position where the mouse pointer 550 is originally located, numeral 461 a trajectory left when the mouse pointer 550 is dragged rightward, numeral 462 a trajectory left when the mouse pointer 550 is dragged
10 leftward, numeral 463 a trajectory left when the mouse pointer 550 is dragged upward, numeral 464 a trajectory left when the mouse pointer 550 is dragged rightward, numeral 471 a position reached when the mouse pointer 550 is dragged rightward, numeral 472 a position
15 reached after the mouse pointer 550 is dragged leftward, numeral 473 a position reached after the mouse pointer 550 is dragged upward, and numeral 474 a position reached after the mouse pointer 550 is dragged rightward.

20 When the arrangement x text field 362 of Fig. 22 is defined by a red frame, the mouse pointer 550 is in its first position 460 in Fig. 23.

Under this condition, assuming that the mouse pointer is dragged to the position 471 rightward as
25 indicated by the trajectory 461, the CG character 451 moves rightward. The arrangement x value text field 362 is changed in accordance with the coverage. In similar fashion, when the mouse pointer is moved to the

position 472 by dragging along the trajectory 462 leftward, the CG character 451 moves leftward, so that the value of the arrangement value x text field 362 is changed in accordance with the coverage.

5 When the arrangement z value text field 363 of Fig. 21 is selected and dragged to the position 473 upward as indicated by the trajectory 463, on the other hand, the CG character 451 moves into the depth, and the value of the arrangement z text field 363 is
10 changed in accordance with the coverage. In similar manner, when the mouse is dragged to the position 474 downward as indicated by the trajectory 464, the CG character 451 is moved forward, so that the value of the arrangement z value text field 363 is changed in
15 accordance with the coverage.

 In the process, the coverage of the CG character is proportional to the amount by which the mouse pointer is dragged (trajectory 461). However, the coverage of the CG character is not equal to the
20 amount by which the mouse is dragged. In the case where the mouse pointer 550 first located at the right eye of the CG character 451 is dragged to move the character, it is difficult to move the right eye of the CG character 451 on the position to which the mouse
25 pointer 550 is moved.

 It is therefore difficult to move the CG character accurately to the target position by use of the mouse.

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ment of the CG object can be changed.

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distance and move direction on the screen each other.

In any case, the operation is required to display the studio set-up window 351 and click the arrangement x value text field 362, the arrangement z
5 value text field 363 or the direction d text field 364 in the studio set-up window 351, thereby complicating the edit work.

According to the embodiment of the invention described below, the aforementioned disadvantage is
10 obviated, and the CG object follows and moves to the position of the mouse pointer. In this embodiment, the CG object can be arranged intuitively, and an image data editing method executed by a simple operation is provided.

15 In order to achieve the object described above, an image editing method according to an embodiment of the invention is such that the position coordinate of the CG object is transformed to the coordinate system on the screen of the monitor window,
20 so that the position of the mouse pointer and the position of the CG object are set in the same coordinate system, and by comparing the position of the CG object with that of the mouse pointer in the common coordinate system, thereby determining whether the
25 object has been designated by the mouse pointer or not.

Further, according to an embodiment of the invention, the coordinate of the mouse pointer is transformed to the same coordinate system as the CG

object, and by moving the CG object to the transformed coordinate position of the mouse pointer, the selected CG object is moved following the mouse pointer.

According to this invention, the mouse
5 pointer 550 is located within the area of the CG object 451 displayed on the monitor window 210 as shown in Fig. 22, and the CG object 451 is moved by being dragged by the mouse pointer 550.

An embodiment of the invention will be
10 described below.

According to this embodiment of the invention, the entire operation of moving the CG object is performed on the monitor window.

First, the selection of a CG object with the
15 mouse clicked in the monitor window 210 according to an embodiment will be explained with reference to Figs. 24 and 25. Fig. 24 is a diagram showing relative positions of the coordinate systems of the camera, the CG object and the mouse pointer according to an embodi-
20 ment of the invention. Numeral 561 designates a view point (camera), numeral 562 a coordinate plane of the monitor window, numeral 550 a mouse pointer on the coordinate plane of the monitor window, numeral 564 a CG studio, numeral 565 a CG object on the studio
25 coordinate, numeral 565' a projection CG object projected on the coordinate plane 502 of the monitor window, numeral 566 a line of sight connecting the camera view point 561 and the object 565.

In Fig. 24, the monitor window 562 is set between the camera 561 and the CG object 565 in the CG studio 564.

The image of the CG object 565 formed on the
5 light receiving surface of the camera is similar to the
projection CG object 565' projected on the virtual
projection plane (the coordinate plane of the monitor
window 565) 562 perpendicular to the optical axis (line
of sight) 566 connecting the camera 561 and an
10 arbitrary point of the CG object 565.

The monitor window 562 corresponds to the display screen of the monitor window 210. The mouse pointer 550 is located in the monitor window 562.

Fig. 25 is a flowchart for explaining a
15 method of determining whether the mouse pointer 550 has
selected the CG object 565' in the case where an
arbitrary point in the monitor window 210 (562 in Fig.
24) is clicked by the mouse pointer 550 (at which the
mouse button is depressed).

20 In step 651, it is determined whether the mouse button has been clicked or not on the monitor window 562. In the case where the mouse button is clicked, the process proceeds to step 652. If the mouse button is not clicked, the standby state is
25 continued until the mouse button is clicked. In step 652, the position coordinate, direction, shape and other setting information of the CG object 565 located in the CG studio 564 and the position coordinate and

direction of the camera 561 are read from the memory 102 (Fig. 5). Then, the process proceeds to step 653.

In step 653, the projection transform is carried out. In the projection transform, the position coordinate is determined on the coordinate plane 562 of the projection CG object 565' produced by projecting the CG object 565' in the CG studio 564 on the coordinate plane 562 of the monitor window. For example, an intersection is determined between the straight line (assumed to be the line of sight 506) extending from the camera 501 to a given point in the CG studio 504 and the coordinate plane 562 of the monitor window constituting a projection plane. This process is performed for each point on the CG object 565. The projection transform of the CG object will be explained in detail later with reference to Figs. 27 to 29.

In step 654, the coordinate of the CG object 555' projected on the monitor window coordinate plane 562 is compared with the coordinate of the mouse pointer 553. In the case where the mouse pointer 550 is located in the coordinate of the CG object 565', the process proceeds to step 655, and otherwise, the process is returned to step 651. In the case where the answer in step 654 is YES, it is determined in step 655 that the particular CG object has been selected by the mouse pointer.

Fig. 26 shows the CG object 565 located on the CG studio 564. Fig. 27 is a diagram for explaining

in more detail the process of projection transform in step 653 in the flowchart of Fig. 25. The CG object located in the studio has a three-dimensional area. The area of the object, as shown in Fig. 26, is defined as a rectangular parallelepiped 570 surrounding the CG object 565. In step 653-1, the area of the parallelepiped 570 is determined. In step 653-2, the parallelepiped 570 on the CG studio coordinate is projected on the coordinate plane 562 of the monitor window. Fig. 28 is a diagram showing the state in which the parallelepiped 570 on the CG studio coordinate is projected on the coordinate plane 562 of the monitor window and becomes a two-dimensional shape 570'. The projected object 570' is located in the two-dimensional shape 570'. In step 653-3, the area of the CG object 565 on the coordinate plane 562 of the monitor window is determined by calculating the coordinate value of the two-dimensional shape 570' on the projection plane 562. In step 654, the coordinate of the mouse pointer 550 is compared with the two-dimensional area 570' of the CG object 565' determined in step 653-3. In the case where the coordinate value of the mouse pointer 550 is located within the area 570' of the CG object, it is determined that the CG object 565 has been selected.

Now, a method of the projection transform in step 653-2 of the flowchart of Fig. 27 will be explained with reference to Figs. 29 to 32.

Fig. 29 is a diagram showing the relation between the world coordinate (CG studio coordinate) system, the uvn coordinate system for setting the projection plane 562 and the coordinate system of the view point 561. Numeral 1001 designates the coordinate axis of the world coordinate system, numeral 1000 the origin of the coordinate axis of the world coordinate system, numeral 1002 the origin of the coordinate axis of the uvn coordinate system, numeral 1003 the origin of the coordinate system of the view point coordinate system, and numeral 1004 the apparent distance between the origin 1002 of the coordinate axis of the uvn coordinate system and the origin 1003 of the coordinate axis of the view point coordinate.

The coordinate transform using the projection method requires the three coordinate systems including the world coordinate system 1001, the uvn coordinate system and the view point coordinate system. The world coordinate system 1001 is set with the xz plane horizontal and the y axis normal to the xz plane. The uvn coordinate system is used for defining the view window, and the plane containing the orthogonal u and v axes constitutes the projection plane 562. The view point coordinate system has the origin at the position of the view point 561 (the camera, in this case) which is set in such a manner that the ez axis coincides with the direction of the visual line (the direction in which the view point is oriented) on the one hand and

the ey axis and the ex axis are parallel to the v axis and the u axis, respectively, of the uvn coordinate system. Also, this point is set on the visual line a predetermined distance away from the origin view point
5 of the uvn coordinate system. This distance f is the apparent distance 1004. The f value is determined based on the zoom rate of the camera.

To facilitate the understanding of this relation, the coordinate relation of the arrangement in
10 Fig. 24 is shown in Fig. 30. The world coordinate system represents the coordinate in the CG studio 564, in which the x direction indicates the lateral direction as viewed from the front of the CG studio 564, the z direction indicates the depth and the y
15 direction the height. The uvn coordinate system represents the coordinate of the coordinate plane 562 (210) of the monitor window, in which the lateral direction represents the u direction, the vertical direction the v direction and the direction of the
20 visual line 506 the n direction. Further, the coordinate system as viewed from the camera 561 is the view point coordinate system, in which the direction of the line of sight is the ez direction, the lateral direction is the ex direction and the vertical direction the
25 ey direction.

The projection transform process is performed in such a manner that the view point coordinate system is superposed on the world coordinate system 1001 and

P(x, y, z) in the world coordinate system 1001 can be transformed to the view point coordinate system.

Next, the process for transforming a point in the view point coordinate system to the uvn coordinate system is performed. A screen normal to the ex axis in the view point coordinate system is located at a position of the distance f. A point P'(u, v) on the projection plane corresponding to the point P is determined from the following equation.

10
$$u = -f(y_1 / x_1) \quad \text{.....(4)}$$

$$v = -f(z_1 / x_1) \quad \text{.....(5)}$$

The projection coordinate (uvn coordinate system) determined from equations (4) and (5) is expressed in m. For acquiring data that can be displayed as an image on the monitor window, the unit is required to be transformed from m to pix indicating the number of pixels. Assume that the monitor window 210 is expressed as 640 pix × 480 pix. Also, assume that the vertical screen angle is va, and the value of the point P expressed as the number of pixels is (U, V). The relation as shown in Figs. 31 and 32 holds. Fig. 31 is a sectional view based on the xy plane representing the relation between the view point in the view point coordinate system and the projection plane.

25 Numeral 1101 designates a position of the view point

(camera), numeral 1102 a projection plane, numeral 1103 an apparent distance and numeral 1104 a point to be transformed. Fig. 32 is a sectional view based on the yz plane representing the relation between the view point in the view point coordinate system and the projection plane, where va is the vertical screen angle expressed in degree ($^{\circ}$) ($= \pi/180$ rad). The horizontal screen angle, which cannot be read from the memory 102, is calculated from the vertical screen angle. In view of the fact the aspect ratio of the monitor window 210 is 4:3, the horizontal screen angle is given as $va \times 4/3$. From the relation given in Figs. 31 and 32, the range of the CG studio displayed on the monitor window 210 is calculated. The distance from the center of the monitor window 208 to the right end of the CG studio displayed on the monitor window 208 is expressed as X , and the distance from the center of the monitor window 208 to the lower end of the CG studio is given as Y . Then, X and Y can be determined from the following equations.

$$X = f \tan\left(\frac{va}{2} \times \frac{4}{3}\right) \quad \dots\dots(6)$$

$$Y = f \tan\left(\frac{va}{2}\right) \quad \dots\dots(7)$$

Also, the following relation is obtained from Figs. 31 and 32.

$$\frac{640}{2} : X = U : n \quad \dots\dots(8)$$

$$\frac{480}{2} : Y = V : v \quad \dots\dots(9)$$

Equation (6) is substituted into equation (8), and equation (7) into equation (9) to obtain the following equations.

$$U = \frac{320 \times u}{f \tan\left(\frac{va}{2} \times \frac{4}{3}\right)} \quad \dots\dots(10)$$

$$V = \frac{240 \times v}{f \tan\left(\frac{va}{2}\right)} \quad \dots\dots(11)$$

The values obtained from equations (10) and (11) are associated with the distance from the center of the coordinate plane 562 (210) of the monitor window. The transform operation is performed to move the points U, V to the point at the upper left corner making up the origin of the coordinate plane 562 of the monitor window. The transform is based on the following calculation.

$$U = \frac{320 \times u}{f \tan\left(\frac{va}{2} \times \frac{4}{3}\right)} + 320 \quad \dots\dots(12)$$

$$V = \frac{240 \times v}{f \tan\left(\frac{va}{2}\right)} + 240 \quad \dots\dots(13)$$

The foregoing calculation permits a point in the world coordinate system 1001 to be transformed to the projection coordinate system 1004 (uvn coordinate system).

5 Now, a method of moving the CG object selected in step 655 of Fig. 25 within the studio 564 by dragging the mouse pointer 550 according to an embodiment of the invention will be described with reference to Figs. 24, 33 and 34. Fig. 33 is a flow-
10 chart for explaining the method of moving the selected CG object 451 to a designated place. Fig. 34 is a diagram showing the image of the monitor window 210 at the time of determining the plane on which the CG object moves as the result of switching the view point
15 according to the invention. The same component elements as the corresponding ones are designated with the same reference numerals, respectively, as those of the prior art described above. Numeral 851 designates a menu for setting the camera position to "front",
20 numeral 852 a menu for setting the camera position to "right", numeral 853 a menu for setting the camera position to "left", numeral 854 a menu for setting the camera position to "just above", and numeral 855 a menu for setting the camera position to "upper right".

25 In Fig. 33, in the case where it is

5 coordinate of the mouse pointer 550 on the monitor
window 210 is acquired. The coordinate value thus
acquired is the value on the projection plane 562. At
the same time, the information on the coordinate and
direction of the camera 501 on the world coordinate
0 system 1001 are acquired from the information memory
102. In step 763, the coordinate of the mouse pointer
550 acquired in step 762 is transformed from the
coordinate (two dimensions) on the projection plane 562
to the coordinate (three dimensions) of the world
5 coordinate system 1001, and the process proceeds to
step 764.

20 In step 765, the plane on which the CG object 451 is moved in accordance with the movement of the mouse pointer 550 is determined, followed by proceeding to step 766. In step 766, based on the plane on which the mouse pointer moves determined as above, the inter-
25 section between the straight line determined in step 764 and the plane on which the project 451 is to move. The intersection thus calculated is determined to be the position of the CG object 451 in the studio.

The straight line connecting the coordinate (m2x, m2y, m2z) of the mouse pointer 550 and the view point (ex, ey, ez) in the world coordinate system calculated in step 762 is given by the following
5 equation.

$$\frac{x - e_x}{m_{2x} - e_x} = \frac{y - e_y}{m_{2y} - e_y} = \frac{z - e_z}{m_{2z} - e_z} \quad \dots\dots(14)$$

where (x, y, z) is the coordinate of the CG character 451. Equation (15) below is used to express the zx plane (view point from ceiling) on which the CG
10 character 451 is dragged by the mouse pointer 550.

$$y = 0 \quad \dots\dots(15)$$

Substituting equation (15) into equation (14), the following equations are obtained.

$$x = \frac{-e_y(m_{2x} - e_x)}{m_{2y} - e_y} + e_x \quad \dots\dots(16)$$

$$15 \quad z = \frac{-e_y(m_{2x} - e_z)}{m_{2y} - e_y} + e_z \quad \dots\dots(17)$$

From equations (16) and (17) above, the intersection between the straight line and the plane is determined, and the coordinate (x, y, z) of the destination of the CG character 451 can be determined. In similar
20 fashion, the equation of the plane for the view point from the front is given as $z = 0$, and the equation of the plane for the view point from right is given as $x =$

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0. By substituting these equations into equation (14), the coordinate of the destination of the CG character is determined.

5 The plane on which the CG object 505 moves is automatically determined by changing the view point in step 765. The view point is changed by switching the view point menu 452 (Fig. 22) in the monitor window 210 to the user view point. The user view point is defined as the one viewed from another camera provided for
10 grasping the position of the CG object located in the CG studio regardless of the ongoing screen (the broadcast image, for example) of a TV program. Five cameras are used as the user view point, and the user need not perform the operation of installing a camera simply for
15 checking the arrangement. The view point can be changed for the position menu 453 in the case where the mouse button is clicked when the view point menu 452 is switched to the user view point.

The method of coordinate transform in step
20 763 according to an embodiment will be explained with reference to Figs. 35 and 36. Fig. 35 is a sectional view based on the zx plane showing the method of calculating the deviation angle θ of the mouse pointer with respect to the line of sight. Fig. 36 is a
25 sectional view based on the yz plane showing the method of calculating the deviation angle ϕ of the mouse pointer with respect to the line of sight. Numeral 1301 designates the position of the view point

(camera), numeral 1302 the projection plane and numeral 1303 the position of the mouse pointer.

Fig. 35 is a sectional view similar to Fig. 31, based on the zx plane showing the relation between the view point, the monitor window and the mouse pointer. Fig. 36 is a sectional view based on the yz plane showing the relation between the view point, the monitor window and the mouse pointer. Numeral 1301 designates the view point (camera), numeral 1302 the projection plane and numeral 1303 the coordinate of the mouse pointer.

First, from the size of the projection plane and the coordinate of the mouse pointer, the deviation angles θ , ϕ with respect to the line of sight of the mouse pointer are calculated. In Figs. 35 and 36, the line of sight is on the z axis. The mouse pointer 1303 is located on the projection plane 1302, and can be acquired from the memory 102 in the form of a 2D coordinate. By designating the point where the projection plane 1302 is located in the world coordinate system 1101, the coordinate of the mouse pointer 1303 in the world coordinate system 1101 is calculated. Considering the projection plane 1302 as virtual, the distance from the view point 1301 can be arbitrarily set. For example, the distance between the view point and the projection plane 102 is set to 1 m. Assume that the coordinate of the mouse pointer on the projection plane 1302 is (mOx , mOy). The origin of the

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$$m_{0y}' = m_{0y} - 240$$

is obtained between θ and ϕ .

$$\frac{640}{2} : \frac{va}{2} \times \frac{4}{3} = m_{0x} : \theta \quad \dots\dots\dots (20)$$

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$$\theta = \frac{va \times m_{0x}'}{240} \quad \dots\dots(22)$$

$$\phi = \frac{va \times m_{0y}'}{240} \quad \dots\dots(23)$$

The coordinate of the position 1303 of the mouse pointer in the view point coordinate system is calculated. The distance between the view point and the projection plane is 1 m. Therefore, the coordinate (m_{1x}, m_{1y}, m_{1z}) of the mouse pointer in the viewpoint coordinate system can be determined from the following equations.

10 $m_{1x} = \tan \theta \quad \dots\dots(24)$

$$m_{1y} = \tan \phi \quad \dots\dots(25)$$

$$m_{1z} = 1 \quad \dots\dots(26)$$

Then, the view point coordinate system is transformed to the world coordinate system 1001.

Assume that the coordinate of the position 1303 of the mouse pointer and the coordinate of the view point 1301 in the world coordinate system 1001 are (m_{2x}, m_{2y}, m_{2z}) and (ex, ey, ez), respectively, the azimuth α and the angle of elevation β . Using the rotational matrix of equations (1) and (2), the following transform equation

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holds.

$$\begin{bmatrix} m_{2x} \\ m_{2y} \\ m_{2z} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} m_{1x} + e_x \\ m_{1y} + e_y \\ m_{1z} + e_z \end{bmatrix} T\beta T\alpha \quad \dots\dots(27)$$

From the foregoing calculation, the coordinate of the position 1303 of the mouse pointer in the world coordinate system 1001 can be calculated.

The menu item 851 in Fig. 34 is displayed by clicking the mouse button of the mouse pointer placed on the position menu 451, so that the CG studio 564 is switched to the view point from the front. Under this condition, the azimuth and elevation of the camera both 0° (0 rad). The menu item 852 is used for switching the CG studio 564 to the view point from the right. The camera azimuth involved is 90° (π/2 rad) and the elevation is 0° (0 rad). The menu item 853 is for switching the CG studio 564 to the view point from the left. Under this condition, the camera azimuth is -90° (-π/2 rad) and the elevation is 0°. The menu item 854 is used for switching the CG studio 564 to the view point from the ceiling. The camera azimuth involved is 0° (0 rad) and the elevation is 90° (π/2 rad). The menu item 855 is used for switching the CG studio 564 to the view point from the upper right direction. The camera azimuth involved is 45° (π/4 rad) and the elevation is 30° (π/6 rad). The azimuth is the angle by which the camera is rotated about the y axis in the

world coordinate system 1001, and increases when the camera is rotated in negative direction along the x axis assuming that the positive direction of z axis is 0° (0 rad). The elevation or the angle of elevation, on the other hand, is the angle by which the camera is rotated about the x axis of the world coordinate system 1001, and increases when the camera is rotated in negative direction along the y axis assuming that the positive direction of z axis is 0° (0 rad). The creator can freely set the position and the direction of the user view point by the view point adjust button 454. In the world coordinate system 1001, the plane on which the CG object 451 moves is automatically is the xy plane in the case where the menu item 851 is selected, i.e. when viewed from the front, the yz plane when the menu 852 or 853 is selected, i.e. when the studio 564 is viewed from the right and left, and the zx plane when the menu item 854 or 855 is selected, i.e. when the studio 564 is viewed from the ceiling or diagonally from above.

Figs. 37 to 39 show the screens of the monitor window in the case where a point on the front, left and just above, respectively, are selected as the user view point. Fig. 37 is a diagram showing the direction in which the CG object 451 moves, as viewed by the user from the front; Fig. 38 is a diagram showing the direction in which the CG object 451 moves, as viewed by the user from the right; and Fig. 39 is a

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Now, the actual operation according to an embodiment will be explained with reference to the screen of Fig. 22 and the flowchart of Fig. 40. Fig.

22 is an enlarged view of the monitor window 210 and was already explained. Fig. 40 is a flowchart for the operation performed from the selection of a CG object to the complete movement thereof. According to this
5 embodiment, a CG character 451 and a desk 455 that is a property are integrated with each other as a CG object in the studio.

In step 901 of Fig. 40, it is determined whether the mouse pointer 550 has been clicked or not
10 on the CG object in the monitor window 210. In the case where the mouse pointer has been clicked on the CG object, the process proceeds to step 902, and otherwise, the standby state is continued until the mouse pointer is so clicked. In step 902, it is determined
15 whether the selected CG object is a CG character or a property.

In the case where the selected CG object is a CG character, the process proceeds to step 903, while otherwise the process proceeds to step 904. In step
20 903, the set mode is determined. In the case where the set mode 352 (Fig. 21) is other than the CG character, the process proceeds to step 905, while in the case where the set mode is a CG character, the process proceeds to step 907. In step 905, the set mode 352 is
25 automatically changed to the character, and the process proceeds to step 907. Also in the case where a property is selected in step 902, the process proceeds to step 907 if the set mode 352 is a property in step

904. Otherwise, the process proceeds to step 906. In step 906, the set mode 32 is automatically changed to a property and the process proceeds to step 907.

In step 907, the direction in which the
5 character board 358 (Fig. 21) and the CG object moves
is highlighted (defined by a red frame), followed by
proceeding to step 908. The restraints are imposed
that the direction in which the CG object moves is
along the plane determined in step 705 in Fig. 33, and
10 the character is not moved in y direction. Thus, only
the arrangement x text field 362 (Fig. 21) is high-
lighted. When the mouse is dragged in step 908, the
process proceeds to step 909. Otherwise, the process
proceeds to step 910. In step 909, the CG object is
15 moved and the process proceeds to step 910.

In step 910, it is determined whether the
operation of releasing the mouse (stopping dragging)
has been carried out or not. In the case where the
dragging is complete, the process proceeds to step 911,
20 while if the dragging is continued, the process returns
to step 908. In step 911, the movement of the CG
object is completed, and the position of the CG object
is stored in the memory 102.

Fig. 41 is a flowchart summarizing the steps
25 of intuitive edit operation (movement of the object)
for the CG object carried out by the mouse pointer 550
on the monitor window 210 in accordance with the
flowcharts of Figs. 25, 27, 33 and 40.

The flowchart of Fig. 41 will be explained.

object moves is displayed on the studio set-up window 351 in a manner easily understandable by the user. An example of this display will be explained below.

Figs. 43 to 45 are diagrams showing a mode control window 810 superposed on the edit window 201 shown in Fig. 21. In these diagrams, the component elements described above are designated by the same reference numerals, respectively, and therefore will not be described. An arrangement y value text field 367 is displayed on the character board 358. The y coordinate value of the CG object 451 is displayed in the arrangement y value text field 367.

Fig. 43 is a diagram showing a view point located on the front of the studio. Fig. 44 is a diagram showing a view point taken from the right side of the studio, and Fig. 45 is a diagram showing a view point taken from the ceiling of the studio.

In Fig. 43, the character 451 constituting a CG object displayed on the preview screen 210 is clicked by mouse. The coordinatio to which the CG character moves is then automatically determined in accordance with the direction of the camera set in step 657 of Fig. 42 to move on the plane on which the CG character moves. In the case under consideration, the xy plane is selected as a plane on which the character 451 moves. At the same time, the character 451 becomes movable along x and y axes, and the arrangement x value text field 362 and the arrangement y value text field

367 are defined by a red frame on the studio set-up window 351, thereby expressly indicating to the user the coordinate axis along which the the character 451 is movable. In similar fashion, in the case shown in Fig. 44, the character 451 is movable in the directions of y and z axes. Therefore, the arrangement z value text field 363 and the arrangement y value text field 367 are displayed in a red frame. In the case shown in Fig. 45, the arrangement x value text field 362 and the arrangement z value text field 313 are displayed in a red frame. The CG character 451, if selected as a CG object, however, is adapted to move always in contact with the floor, and therefore does not move in the direction of y axis. A property (such as a desk), if selected as a CG object, on the other hand, can move also in the direction of y axis.

The direction of movement of the CG object can be displayed in a form easily recognize to the user other than by a red frame. For example, the particular frame may be brightened than the other frames, flickered or thickened. According to this embodiment, the user is able to intuitively grasp the direction in which the CG object moves, and therefore the working efficiency of arranging a CG object is improved.

Still another embodiment will be explained with reference to Figs. 46 to 48. Fig. 46, like the flowchart of Fig. 25, shows the flow of the process performed when the mouse is clicked on the monitor

window 210. In Fig. 46, the same reference numerals as those in Fig. 25 designate the same component elements, respectively, and therefore will not be described. In Fig. 46, steps 660, 661, 662 are added after selecting
5 a CG object in step 655. In step 660, it is determined whether the object 401 clicked on the monitor window 210 is a CG character or a property. In the case where the selected CG object is a CG character, the process proceeds to step 661, and the studio set-up mode is
10 automatically set to the character setting mode. In the case where the selected CG object is a property, on the other hand, the process proceeds to step 662 in which the studio set-up mode is automatically set to the property setting mode.

15 Figs. 47 and 48 are diagrams for explaining a specific example of the functions of determining whether the CG object displayed on the monitor window 210 is a CG character or a property and automatically switching the setting mode of the studio set-up window
20 351.

Fig. 47, which is basically similar to Fig. 21, shows a mouse pointer 550 displayed on the monitor window 210. Assume that it is desired to display a desk 455 as a property not yet displayed on the monitor
25 window 210. For adding the desk 455 to the monitor window 210, the first step is to select the property in the setting mode select menu 352 on the studio set-up window 351 shown in Fig. 21. As a result, the

5 is a property is displayed on the monitor window 210.

arbitrary position. Numeral 370 designates a type

10 select menu, numeral 371 a display select menu, numeral
372 a name text field, numeral 373 a file name select
text field, numeral 374 a file select button, numeral
375 a width text field, numeral 376 a height text
field, numeral 377 an x text field, numeral 378 a z
15 text field, numeral 379 a y text field, numeral 380 a
yaw test field, numeral 381 a pitch text field, numeral
382 a roll text field, and numeral 383 a scale text
field, all of which are arranged on the prop board 369.
Fig 48 is a diagram basically similar to Fig. 21.

20 In the case where the setting mode of the
studio set-up is the property as shown in Fig. 47, the
arrangement of the CG character 451 on the monitor
window 210 can be changed by clicking the mouse button
of the mouse pointer 550 located on the CG character
25 451 on the monitor window 210. As a result, the
property add button 368 and the prop board 369 are
deleted from the display of the studio set-up window
351 shown in Fig. 47, and the character add button 353

and the character board 358 of Fig. 48 are displayed in place. Also, the display of the setting mode select menu 352 shown in Fig 47 is automatically switched from "property setting" to "character setting", expressly
5 indicating that the CG character can be rearranged. In similar fashion, in the case where the setting mode is the character as shown in Fig. 48, the property 455 can be rearranged by placing the mouse pointer on the proper 455 on the monitor window 210 and clicking the
10 mouse button. As a result, the character board 358 and the character add button 353 are deleted, and the prop board 369 and the property add button 368 are displayed in place. Also, the display of the setting mode select menu 352 is automatically switched to "property
15 setting", expressly indicating that the property can be rearranged.

As described above, according to this invention, the character board 358 and the prop board 369 displayed on the studio set-up window 351 can be automatically switched to each other simply by clicking the CG character 451 or the properties 455 on the monitor window 210. As a result, the character setting mode and the property setting mode can be switched to each other simply by manipulating the mouse on the monitor window 210 without any input operation on the studio set-up window 351. As a result, the work required of the user is simplified for an improved edit work efficiency of image sequence creation.

Although the foregoing explanation refers to the studio set-up window 351, the invention is applicable with equal effect to the motion set-up window for editing the motion of the CG object and to
5 the screen for editing a CG object.

Yet another embodiment will be explained with reference to Figs. 49 to 54. According to this embodiment, the restraints of the direction in which a CG object displayed on the monitor window 210 moves when
10 it is clicked are determined in accordance with the orientation of the camera. The restraints are defined as a virtual plane on which the CG object moves when the mouse pointer is dragged on the monitor screen 210. The camera orientation is determined by the angle of
15 elevation and the azimuth angle.

Fig. 49 shows the relation between the angle of elevation of the camera and the plane on which the CG object moves. Numeral 1801 designates a coordinate axis having the origin at the camera position, in which
20 the page of the drawing is the yz plane and the direction perpendicular to the page is the x axis. Numeral 1802 designates the camera. The dotted line 1803 indicates the boundary at which the plane on which the CG object moves is switched when changing the angle
25 of elevation of the camera 1802. The angle of elevation is set to 0° when the camera 1802 is directed in positive direction along the z axis. Fig. 50 is a diagram showing the relation between the azimuth angle

of the camera 1802 and the plane on which the CG object moves. Numeral 1901 designates a coordinate axis having the origin at the camera position, in which the page of the drawing constitutes the zx plane and the direction perpendicular to the page is the y axis. The dotted line 1902 indicates the boundary at which the plane on which the CG object moves is switched when changing the azimuth angle of the camera 1802. The azimuth angle is assumed to be 0° when the camera 1802 is oriented in positive direction along the z axis. Fig. 51 is a flowchart showing the process from the clicking of the CG object to the determination of the plane on which the CG object moves.

First, a method of selecting the plane on which the CG object moves in the case where the orientation of the camera switching the plane on which the CG object moves is assumed to be 45° in azimuth and 20° in elevation will be explained with reference to Figs. 49 to 51.

In step 2001, the values of the angle of elevation and the azimuth angle of the camera are acquired from the memory 102. In the case where it is determined in step 2002 that the elevation of the camera 1802 is between 20° and 160° inclusive or between 200° and 340° inclusive, the zx plane is selected in step 2003 as a plane on which the CG object is moved. In the case where the answer in step 2002 is NO, the process proceeds to step 2004. In other words,

as shown in Fig. 50, the plane on which the CG object moves is determined in accordance with the azimuth angle of the camera 1802.

In the case where it is determined in step 2004 that the azimuth angle of the camera 1802 is between 0° and 45° inclusive, between 135° and 225° inclusive or not lower than 315° but lower than 360° , then the xy plane is selected in step 2005 as the plane on which the CG object moves. In the case where the determination in step 2004 is NO, the yz plane is selected in step 2006 as a plane on which the CG object moves.

Now, the relation between the screen displayed on the monitor window 210 and the plane on which the CG object moves will be explained with reference to Figs. 52 to 54. Fig. 52 shows an example of the screen on the monitor window 210 in the case where the azimuth angle of the camera 1802 is 0° and the elevation thereof is 70° . When the CG character 451 constituting a CG object is clicked, the zx plane is selected as a plane on which the CG character 451 moves according to the flowchart, and therefore the CG object 451 becomes movable in the directions of x and y axes. Fig. 53 shows an example screen of the monitor window 210 in the case where the azimuth angle of the camera 1802 is 30° and the elevation thereof is 0° . Since the xy plane is selected as a plane on which the CG character 451 moves, the CG character 451 moves along x

and y axes. Fig. 54 shows an example of the screen of the monitor window 210 in the case where the azimuth angle of the camera 1802 is 60° and the elevation thereof is 0° . Since the yz plane is selected as a
5 plane on which the CG character 451 moves, the CG character 451 becomes movable along both y and z axes.

By making it possible to automatically switch the plane on which the CG object moves in accordance with the position (orientation) of the camera by the
10 aforementioned process, the program edit work is possible simply by manipulating the mouse on the screen of the monitor window 210 in whatever direction the camera is positioned.

The embodiment described above refers to the
15 case in which the camera position for switching the plane on which the CG object moves is at the azimuth angle of 45° and the elevation of 20° . Nevertheless, the user can set the camera position as desired for switching the plane on which the CG object moves. This
20 can be implemented by describing the camera position (elevation and azimuth) for switching the plane on which the CG object moves, in the setting file for reading when starting the program editing apparatus according to this invention.

25 In the aforementioned embodiment, a person was taken as an example of a CG character. Nevertheless, the CG character is not limited to the person, but the present invention of course is applicable to a

living creature, a plant, etc. and all the objects,
real or virtual, conceivable as an image.

Also, although an image data editing method was explained as a TV program editing method for creating and editing a TV program according to the embodiments described above, the present invention of course is applicable to the editing of all image data for creating and editing the video information such as the education TV, the demonstration video, moving images of conference materials, etc.

Further, the invention is of course applicable to not only the CG studio modeling after an actual TV studio but all images (scenes) corresponding to the virtual reality, images (scenes) picked up in reality and a combined space of them.

It will thus be understood from the foregoing description that according to this invention, a method of operation for moving a CG object immediately following the mouse pointer has been realized. As a result, it has become possible to arrange a CG object directly on the monitor window, thereby improving the efficiency of the work for producing and editing image sequences.

Also, it has become possible to arrange a CG object simply by manipulating the monitor window for an improved operability of the work for producing moving image.